

Washington Disturbed by Soviet Switch

Shakeup Believed
To Be Result of
Internal Trouble

By Chalmers M. Roberts
Staff Reporter

Official Washington took the view yesterday that more time would be needed to figure out what the big shift in Moscow means—but nobody thought it means anything pleasant for the United States and the non-Communist world.

President Eisenhower discussed the situation with Republican leaders at their weekly White House meeting. Senate Minority Leader William F. Knowland (R-Calif.) later said that "the general consensus was that it is probably too early to know the significance."

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, on the Hill for a House Appropriations Committee hearing, told reporters that "we have been expecting something like this. There have been signs of internal trouble." But he would not say whether he felt the Moscow shifts meant good or bad news for the world.

Walter Bedell Smith, former Undersecretary of State and ambassador to Russia, said: "I can't take any comfort from all this. I don't like the looks of it a bit. It certainly doesn't mean that relations with the Soviets are going to be any easier."

Most commenting members of Congress tended to take a view similar to that of Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Walter F. George (D-Ga.). George said that the switch "looks like a tougher policy, both in Russia and abroad."

The most ominous note from Moscow yesterday, some ex-

perts pointed out, was the way in which Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov repealed former Premier Georgi Malenkov's view that another world war would "mean destruction of world civilization." Yesterday Molotov pointedly said that "in case of eventual war world civilization would not perish" but only "blood-saturated imperialism" would be destroyed. Because of the great concern within the Eisenhower Administration over the advent of the hydrogen bomb, some hope had been taken here from Malenkov's statement, made last March. Some officials as well as a large body of scientists, although not all, feel that the facts back Malenkov rather than Molotov. And on top of the "repeal" statement, Molotov yesterday boasted of Soviet H-bomb leadership.

A canvass of experts both inside and outside the Government, taken with the available information from Moscow, indicated these were some of the other questions and possible answers on what the Moscow news was all about.

• Was it a domestic or foreign policy crisis? The general view was that the change was due primarily to domestic problems—the agricultural crisis and the military's unwillingness to see heavy industry lose at the expense of light industry useful for consumer goods. Former Premier Malenkov had advocated more consumer goods. Perhaps the crisis came over the budget when something had to give. Light industry clearly "gave," even though it had not as yet made any real inroads into heavy industry.

• Was it a personal struggle for power? It probably was, in part at least. Some experts felt that the military would not agree to oust Malenkov in favor of Nikita Khrushchev and hence Marshal Nikolai Bulganin was chosen as the new Premier.

• Does it mean the post-Stalin "collective leadership" is dead? Not yet, although a division of power runs counter to the very idea of totalitarian government such as that in the Soviet Union. Khrushchev appears to be the "strong man" but, at least, thus far, not a Stalin.

• Who now is running Russia? The Communist Party, by all signs. Molotov significantly pointed out to those who oppose Russia that 77 of every 100 Soviet soldiers belong to the

Party or the Young Communist League.

• Where does the army leadership stand? This is as unclear as it has been since Stalin's death. The army seems to exert a negative influence, at least, in opposing consolidation of all power—political and secret police especially—in one man who might push it around as Stalin did. The role of Marshal Grigory Zhukov remains unclear.

• When was the shift in personalities decided on? There were signs of a coming shift in November. The Supreme Soviet meeting (before which the change was announced yesterday) was summoned on January 23 to meet two months early, indicating the shift had been firmly decided by then at least. Numerous newspaper articles support these views.

• Does it mean a tougher line in foreign policy? One expert's view is that "this is a reactionary shift." Another feels that "the shift should bring us back to the realities of the Soviet Union and take us away from the tendency toward wishful thinking." In short, the Kremlin "line" never really varied basically despite the Malenkov "peaceful coexistence" talk. But there is as yet no reason to read into the shifts any aggressive military moves.

• Does the change make any difference in Moscow's attitude toward Red China over the Formosa issue? Molotov yesterday gave Peiping more support than Malenkov appeared to have been giving. This might encourage Peiping to make rash moves. Still, the new Moscow leadership probably does not want to see Red China in a war with the United States any more than did Malenkov because the Soviet Union might be drawn in. But this is admittedly highly speculative.

• Where does all this leave Molotov? The foreign minister, part of the collective leadership triumvirate after Stalin's death, apparently has no taste for top-level Kremlin power politics. He seemingly will remain relative (but far from

completely) free agent in forming and executing policy.

When the Atomic Energy Commission was asked for comment on Molotov's claim to H-bomb leadership, a spokesman pointed out that AE C Chairman Lewis L. Strauss on January 11, in referring to superweapons, had said: "It is my honest belief that we are well ahead of any competition at this time."

Rep. Sterling Cole (R-N. Y.), former chairman of the Joint Atomic Energy Committee, said he was not "surprised" at the Soviet claim, though he did not know "whether the comparison is justified." Cole added that "I have been trying to emphasize that we should not discount Soviet scientific skill in the atomic weapons field."

These were other reactions yesterday to the Moscow news:

Vice President Richard Nixon, in Havana, Cuba, said: "I imagine Khrushchev is running the show. We should have expected a struggle for power after Stalin's death. In my opinion, that struggle is not over and we should expect further resignations. Please put resignations between quotation marks."

Former President Harry S. Truman in Kansas City said "things can't get any worse in Russia." He was hopeful Bulganin's appointment would mean an improvement. He added: "I don't have any Central Intelligence Agency any more so I can't comment further except to say we all ought to continue to pray for peace."

Gov. Averell Harriman of New York, former Ambassador to Russia, said in Albany that "the elimination of Malenkov is an unfortunate development for the people of the free countries and unhappy news for those living behind the Iron Curtain who will now be further exploited under the Bulganin-Khrushchev policies. This development underlines my conviction... that this is no time for us to reduce our defense establishment or to relax our support for mutual security with friendly nations around the world."

Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.), said he was "rather shocked that the intelligence and political analysis facilities of our Government and others had no information as to the possibility of this, or at least didn't give much credence to it."

Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson, answering a question by Wickersham at a House Armed Services subcommittee hearing, described the shakeup as "just another little ripple" as far as American defense policy was concerned. He indicated he was using the phrase, the same one he used earlier to describe the Formosa situa-